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REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES

Monumenti Vaticani di Paleografia Musicale Latina Raccolti ed Illustrati da ENRICO MARRIOTT BANNISTER. (Vol. XII of *Codices e Vaticanis Selecti Phototypice Expressi* . . . *Opera Curatorum Bybliothecae Vaticanae*).

The science of musical palaeography, even more so than that of palaeography in general, is still in its infancy. The foundations were laid in 1880 by Dom Pottier's work, *Les Mélodies Grégoriennes d'après la Tradition*. Most of the credit for progress since then must be awarded to that learned congregation under whose auspices Dom Pottier's book appeared, the Benedictines of Solesmes. They have published in their famous *Paléographie Musicale* facsimiles of entire manuscripts and selected pages from different manuscripts illustrating the history of musical notation; they have edited a number of service-books, some according to the Roman rite, some according to the rites of various monastic orders. But much remains to do. Oskar Fleischer, in his *Neumenstudien*, 1897, could lament the fact that the fine collection of musical manuscripts in the Vatican Library had never been adequately explored. That charge can no longer be made. In 1904, the Reverend Henry Marriott Bannister, the eminent authority on liturgics, prepared for the Gregorian Congress held in Rome a catalogue of the principal Vatican manuscripts with musical notation. This small but useful undertaking has now grown into the two portly folios under review.

In this monumental work, Mr. Bannister has registered and described every manuscript in the Vatican bearing the faintest trace of musical notes. There are 1065 entries in all, with 132 plates of admirable reproductions in collotype containing 211 facsimiles of 206 manuscripts. Only a few manuscripts later than the year 1300 are reproduced, for by that time the square notation, which lies beyond the scope of this work, was established in all the countries of Europe. An excellent introduction treats of the history of musical notation in the Middle Ages and the forms and uses of neums. The manuscripts are classed under a skilful combination of chronological and geographical principles, so that the plates and the descriptions of them carry out in the same order and in fuller detail the divisions of the subject treated in the introduction. A special feature is the

elaborate series of plates illustrating the forms of neums, which here for the first time are given not in drawings but, by a difficult process skilfully executed, in photographs. Each one of the two thousand varieties bears a letter or a number and is designated by this in the descriptions and in the register of neums, where one can find at a glance the period and the locality in which any form was used. There is also a wealth of indices. The index of manuscripts gives immediate access to the very careful descriptions of them and thus forms an important supplement to the catalogues now in process of publication by the Vatican Library. The Geographical Index facilitates the use of the plates in the study of scripts and neums of any particular centre, as Lorsch or Monte Cassino. Another index gives the first words of every liturgical text published in the facsimiles or cited in the descriptions and another refers to the melodies published. The *Indice Musicale* contains matters of palaeographical as well as musical interest. There are still other indices and appendices and conscientious lists of *Addenda* and *Corrigenda*.

In a word, while exactly fulfilling the purpose set forth in the title, Mr. Bannister's work is incidentally the most important systematic and comprehensive treatment yet made of musical notation in the Middle Ages before the introduction of the square notation. For the Vatican Library, with its diverse collections, is palaeographically one of the most representative libraries in Europe. A scientific account of the different sorts of musical notation exhibited in its manuscripts is a treatment of the subject of musical notation itself. Other libraries can supply more abundant material for some separate school or country; few if any command so broad an outlook over the whole field. Further, no library but the Vatican contains the store of Italian material which is indispensable to the historian of the subject and which Mr. Bannister is the first to use. He informs us several times that his chief concern is with the palaeographical rather than the musical aspects of the subject and he discreetly avoids matters of controversy in the history of mediaeval music. But the two matters are inextricably involved and both are treated with the competence of an expert. He is also a good teacher. The neums in each important manuscript are minutely registered and the music is not infrequently reproduced in square notation; one has frequent opportunities for a lesson in neums. The work, then, is at once a thesaurus of facts, a practical manual and a noteworthy contribution to science.

After Mr. Bannister's publication, a neumless palaeographer must hang his head for shame. In fact, according to our author, neums are a surer criterion for dating than script is. Whereas an earlier script is often imitated two or three cen-

turies later, neums, to be intelligible, would be done in the system prevalent at the time of writing. Waiving this point, which will bear discussion, one cannot fail to recognize the classes made so clearly in Mr. Bannister's plates and descriptions. The delicate grace of the French neums, the clear firmness of Italian neums and the marked corpulence of the later German neums are apparent. The system of Aquitaine and that of Metz and Como have striking characteristics. It is interesting that German neums like German script are tenaciously conservative. German notation agreeing in essential traits with a French style can be dated a generation later. Special Beneventan neums accompany the Beneventan script and help determine the geographical area of that style; its name, incidentally, with which Traube re-christened it, has evidently come to stay.¹ Outside the Beneventan region in the eleventh and twelfth centuries there prevailed other Italian scripts badly needing investigation; Mr. Bannister is the first to give a systematic account of the neums accompanying them, and doubtless his studies will inspire further research. Visigothic forms are most peculiar and yet bespeak the same origin as that of the other varieties; their curious developments enable us to set very early that primal Italian style from which all the others descended.

Of course the appeal to neums will not solve all questions of dating. It cannot apply to manuscripts before the tenth century, since ninth century manuscripts with neums are, or seem to be, exceedingly rare. Further qualifications must be made. French and English neums of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are much alike, so are the earliest South Italian and the French and so are the later neums of Metz and of Germany. Cases of uncertainty are bound to arise, but that is nothing new in palaeography. Further study will doubtless confirm with new details and distinctions what is obvious at present, that neums will be a necessary auxiliary in the rapidly growing science of regional palaeography.

Such is Mr. Bannister's skill in presentation that the neumless palaeographer can learn to use this thesaurus without much trouble. He has only to read the introduction to find what are the forms and varieties of neums in general, to identify a series of neums in the manuscript he is studying with the photographic portraits of neums in the plates and then to consult the numbers in the Register. The first neum in his text, let us say, is *virga C 2*. The register shows it is either F(rench) s. X-XII or It(alian). s. XI-XII. The next is *pes liquescens 14*, which is G(erman) s. XI-XII or F. s.

¹ See the conclusive treatment of this matter in Dr. E. A. Loew's *Beneventan Script*. pp. 22 ff.

XI-XII. By a process of elimination, these neums should be French. Then comes a *flexa resupina* which does not exactly correspond to any of the forms in the plate. Looking about on the page to see if the scribe has other less eccentric varieties, one discovers *c 6*, which is F. s. X-XII (five manuscripts), or It. s. XI-XII (one manuscript). This is followed by *pes flexus f. 14*, which is F. s. XI-XII, *quilisma A 15*, G. s. X (one manuscript), or F. s. XI-XII (six manuscripts), and later, *pes c 5*, F. s. XI-XII. One can at least form the tentative hypothesis that the neums are French of the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century.¹ The all-important fact that the plates contain photographs and not drawings make them a trustworthy guide.

As stated above, there are very few texts with neums of the ninth century. Mr. Bannister excludes various manuscripts heretofore admitted as of that period and criticizes the tendency to date books too early. But there is also a tendency to date books too late, represented monumentally by Reifferscheid, to whose opinions Mr. Bannister perhaps too frequently defers. To take a few Vatican manuscripts which I happen to have examined, Palatinus 209 is dated tenth century by Mr. Bannister, following Stevenson and Reifferscheid, and its neums are registered as German. The manuscript was evidently at Franchenthal in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and German neums were inscribed on an added *feuille de garde*, but the book itself, I venture to believe, was written at some monastery near Tours, perhaps Fleury, before the middle of the ninth century. The neums on its first page then may be not "*tedeschi sottili*", but French. In fact, from a comparison of my photograph of this page with Mr. Bannister's description and his plates, they seem to me quite as likely French as German.² If Mr. Bannister is right in thinking the neums contemporaneous with the text, this specimen, though not extensive in amount is of distinct historical interest as one of the earliest instances of French neums. No. 114, Reginensis 321, may be dated from a hymn it contains in honor of Count William, Abbot of St. Julian at Brioude either before 883 or before 918 or before 926. The earliest of those dates seems to me altogether possible from the writing, which may have been done at Orleans, thinks Mr. Bannister, and at any rate

¹ This example is from one of the plates (No. 44. Regin. 592, Fleury s. XI ex.). I successfully tested several others by the method indicated.

² *Quil. "5" praeapun.* (G. s. XI-XII), but quite as near, I think, to A 1 (G. s. XI-XII, F. s. X). *Vir. "A 5" sub diatessar.* (G. s. X-XII It. s. XI-XII, etc.), but clearly the episema is at the left, not the right, and the style is C 1 (G. s. X-XII, F. s. IX-XI), or C 2 (F. s. X-XII, It. s. XI-XII). *Virga accentuata "A 3"* (G. IX-XII, F. s. XI-XII), and so on.

suggests a later variety of the script of the famous Bible of Theodulf. The neums, some of which are written diastematically, are not unlike those of the manuscript reproduced in the preceding plate (No. 12), Vaticanus 474, which according to a scribe's note was revised and punctuated by Lupus Servatus, Abbot of Ferrières from 840 to 862. Had it not been for this note, this text too would have presumably been assigned to the tenth century.¹ There are other cases of doubt, some recognized by the author, where manuscripts and neums assigned to the tenth century might well be of the end of the ninth. It seems extraordinary, at first, that even allowing for these possible corrections we find so few books of the ninth century with neums. As set forth in the introduction, melodies were at first learned from the master and transmitted, in the main, orally. Still there must have been some written record, one would imagine, of the music of the entire liturgy. Indeed the famous Winchester Trope (No. 226) of the eleventh century, was probably copied² from an original written at Fleury or at Tours in the ninth.

Here I may trespass a moment upon alien ground, yet not all too remote. In another recent publication of great moment, Dr. E. A. Loew's *Beneventan Script*, the system of punctuation employed by Beneventan scribes is derived with good reason from neums. In particular, the mark of interrogation is treated in an illuminating way on the basis of new material and observations. In a "nominal" question, i. e. one introduced by a specially interrogative word, a sign like the Arabic figure 2 is placed over the accented syllable of such a word, as in

² qui sunt et ² unde venerunt.

In a "predicate" question, which lacks the introductory interrogative, like

² hoc sum terraque marique ² secuta

the sign is set over some word or words which receive the raised inflexion. It was intended originally as a guide in reading aloud and is nothing else than the neum *flexa resupina* of which the normal form is *N*³ and of which the final element represents a raising of the voice. Now Dr. Loew, in presenting his highly convincing argument that the Beneventan system is independent of the Spanish informs us, nevertheless, that Visigothic manuscripts show a somewhat similar usage. In them a nominal question receives a circumflex accent over the last word as

quid hoc feci[^]sti,

¹ P. 32: Ciò riapre la questione della data del ms., il quale a prima vista pare del secolo X.

³ A 1—A 8, etc. An approach to the figure 2 is C 7.

² See p. 76.

whereas a predicate question is followed by the sign *N*, as

sic respondes pontifici *N*

Dr. Loew might have made his case stronger still by pointing out that these two signs are very common and normal forms of neums, \wedge being *flexa* and *N flexa resupina*. Spaniard and Beneventan agree in using a punctuation based on neums but differ in their special methods. The common practice must have originated early to give time for these different developments. In a nominal question, we see, the Beneventan scribe put a rising accent on the interrogative at the beginning, and let the end of the sentence take care of itself;¹ the Spaniard put a *flexa* at the end to denote the lowering of the voice that usually² occurs there, while he left the inflexion of the beginning words to be understood. In a predicate question, the Beneventan wrote the *flexa resupina* over various important words, the Spaniard used it only at the end of the sentence, where the accent would rise. In the form of his neums, the Spaniard adheres more closely to the original system.

Dr. Loew remarks³ on the relation between neums and punctuation:

“Our oldest manuscripts with neums are not older than the end of the ninth century. Our oldest interrogation-signs are a whole century older.⁴ Did the neums come from these signs, or did these signs come from the neums, or—which seems more likely—did they both come from a common source, the Greek prosodic accents?⁵ These are questions which further researches will have to clear up”. Further research indeed is necessary as well as further material of the kind that Mr. Bannister and Dr. Loew have abundantly provided. Meanwhile the facts seem best explained by supposing that the

¹ At least in the earliest period when signs of interrogation are used at all, i. e. from the end of the ninth to the end of the tenth century. In the second period, from the end of the tenth through the first third of the eleventh century, various kinds of question-marks, including one (ω) that resembles a *pes quassus* or *quilisma* were added. This practice, says Dr. Loew (p. 245) was not invariable. May it be that such signs were used only in case of a rising accent at the end of the sentence? After a rhetorical question, like the examples cited by Loew on page 244 (e. g. *quid ego de te digne dicam*), the voice falls, but excitement, wonder or indignation would raise it. Possibly then, in this intermediate period, fine distinctions of intonation were indicated, the question-mark later becoming a merely conventional sign.

² But, again, not invariably.

³ P. 251,

⁴ In certain French manuscripts of the end of the eighth century.

⁵ The assertion-sign (\vdash), to which Loew is the first to call attention, seems rather a modified form of the *flexa* than either “the note *d*, the tonic in the Lydian scale” or the “Greek rough breathing”. Similarly the sign \dashv is not the smooth breathing, but a modified form of *pes*. Cf. Bannister, Plate II, B 10, 12.

signs of punctuation are selections from the elaborate system of musical notation which, itself based upon prosodic accents, was in vogue before Visigothic and Beneventan parted on their diverse ways.

Mr. Bannister handles with proper caution the question whether neums can express time, but on the whole he inclines to the recent views of P. Wagner, Neumenkunde, 1912, that shorts and longs were indicated. This seems indeed well nigh certain after Wagner's discussion of the Anonymus Vaticanus of the eleventh century. The statements of the unknown writer are explicit. After defining *cantus* he remarks:

Ortus quoque suus atque compositio ex accentibus toni vel ex pedibus sillabarum ostenditur. Ex accentibus vero toni demonstratur in acuto et gravi et circumflexo, ex pedibus denique sillabarum ostenditur in brevi et longa.

Here is an avowal both of the accentual origin of neums and of their metrical value. The author proceeds to give instances of combinations of neums and of varieties of times, citing illustrative melodies. His statements are detailed and apparently coherent, only it is difficult to get their meaning. Mr. Bannister first pointed out that they are further elucidated by the neums that are written, doubtless by the original hand, in the margin and, a few of them, between the lines. There are puzzles in this brief account, but it is clear at least in distinguishing three varieties of *punctum*, namely, *breve* (.), *grave* (·) and *subpositum* (-), and three varieties of *virga*, namely, *producta* (>), *acuta* ('), and *circumflexa* (^), this last being the composite neum *flexa*. The script I should have guessed English, did not Mr. Bannister emphatically pronounce it German. In either case the present text shows something of a history behind it. In the original, we should infer, a complete set of interlinear neums was given or at least the connection was made clear between the text and those in the margin. In our manuscript, owing to a defective piece of parchment—the lower left hand corner is incomplete—the neums were started considerably higher in the margin than where they belong. Moreover there is apparently a variant of one of the neums given in l. 7. Farther to the right of the last note, *p*, we see *t p*, that is, *climacus liquescens*¹ vel *flexa liquescens*.² This variant is not understood by our copyist, however, else it would have stood nearer to the note in question. It was added in some antecedent copy by a scribe who understood musical notation. Other uncertainties in the neums of our manuscript may perhaps be laid to the ignorance of its scribe. The treatise is thus earlier at least than the

¹5; G. s. XI-XII, F. s. XI-XII, Eng. s. XI.

²13; G. s. IX-XIII, F. s. X-XIV.

present copy. Am I too bold in suggesting that it may have been made, unintelligently, in England, from a French or German original?¹ If this highly important document is typical of the Middle Ages in general, further research should discover an elaborate system of time-notation used not only at St. Gall, as Mr. Bannister is willing to admit, but in Europe at large. Possibly, indeed, it was a feature of the original Gregorian system.

Another matter for inquiry is the history of diastematic notation, or the arrangement of notes according to pitch-intervals. This is regarded as a later development, though instances may not be lacking in the ninth century. It seems easier to suppose that the height of tones, indicated always in such forms of separate neums as *pes flexa*, *scandicus*, *climacus*, was marked just as clearly by the original system in a succession of these notes. Indeed the Italian scribe, Mr. Bannister declares, seems often to have written with an imaginary line in mind, or may have even made a temporary guide by snapping a dust-covered string on his page. The original intention could readily be confused by an ignorant copyist or abandoned even by an intelligent copyist owing to the necessity of writing between narrow lines. In view of the importance of oral instruction, this negligence of the scribes would not be deemed serious at first, though it led in certain regions to complete ignorance of diastematic notation. The latter, however, gradually prevailed again, and eventually was succeeded by the staff.

The whole subject, in fine, is brim-full of vital problems, which Mr. Bannister's splendid publication should greatly help to solve. Some classical scholar should undertake a much-needed investigation of the manuscripts of the ancient poets whose works were set to music during the Middle Ages; a preliminary list is given on page 65, and see also the *Indice Musicale s. v. Neumi*. But whether these questions are settled or not, Mr. Bannister's work can stand on its own merits as an indispensable thesaurus for the study of both palaeography and the history of musical notation.

E. K. RAND.

¹The volume contains five different manuscripts: I. Paulinus of Nola in an insular hand of the eighth century; II. Aldhelm s. XI; III, extracts from Bede, the Anonymus *de cantu*, etc., s. XI; IV, Glosses on Prudentius, s. X; V, a treatise on the computus, in a hand resembling No. III, followed by Notker's *prosa* for the festival of St. John Baptist, with German neums. There are also German neums on a page of No. III. There are no indications of provenience, save that No. II belonged to a monastery at Huysberg, Saxony, in the fifteenth century.